



NEWS FROM:

City of Oakland and the Oakland Fire Department

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15th Anniversary Commemorative Event of the 1991 Oakland/Berkeley Firestorm on October 21, 2006

Carrying the Spirit Forward - Communities Partnering for Wildfire Prevention

(Oakland, CA) All residents of Oakland and Berkeley are invited to attend a public wildfire safety event to commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the devastating 1991 Firestorm. It will be held on Saturday, October 21, 2006, at the Rockridge BART Station on College Avenue, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A special Commemorative Ceremony will be part of the event at 12:00 noon at the Memorial Tile Wall, with CBS 5 Reporter Sherry Hu as mistress of ceremonies, and presentations by prominent Bay Area leaders.

More than 25 community wildfire prevention partners will be present, with more than a dozen fire engines, emergency vehicles and urban rescue units on display for interaction with the public. Smokey the Bear, a Fire Safety House (simulates a smoke-filled home), Oakland Citizens Respond to Emergencies (CORE), U.C. Extension's Home Construction Fire Demo, and others will provide valuable experiences for children and adults alike. A wide array of information and activities will demonstrate the many enhancements in wildfire prevention resources.

"Working together as partners we are achieving a greater level of fire safety," according to Oakland Fire Chief Daniel Farrell. "We want people to be extremely aware of the risks we all share in our beautiful, yet potentially hazardous, Oakland hills. We need to do all we can to raise awareness and increase preparedness to help reduce the wildfire risk we all face."

Since 1991, our neighboring cities, fire departments, neighborhood and homeowner associations, along with state and federal agencies and individual homeowners and residents have been working together to reduce the risk of wildfire. Our theme is "fire knows no boundaries" and our aim is to raise awareness of resources available for prevention and preparedness. Our mutual goal is to protect our families, homes, lives and the environment we treasure.

The question is not if...it is when. The 1991 Firestorm still ranks as one of the largest fire disasters ever and our hills are one of the most severe wildfire-risk areas in the nation.

Essentially every 20 years there has been a major wildfire in our area: 1923, 1946, 1970 and 1991. 2011 is only five years away. Are you ready? Come learn what you can do to be wildfire safe.

For more information on the event, call (510) 238-7388, visit www.Oaklandnet.com/WildfirePrevention or email WildfirePrevention@Oaklandnet.com.